WILLIAMS JESSIE M 01/21/81 103052 PRINTER: LI
79 STATE 113380

UNCLASSIFIED

(2138)
R

UNCLASSIFIED
PAGE 01 STATE 113380
ORIGIN ARA-15
INFO OCT-01 ADS-00 SS-15 NSCE-00 PA-02 ICAE-00 H-02
/035 R
DRAFTED BY ARA/CAR:R A MCCOY:KC
APPROVED BY ARA/CAR:A C HEWITT
----------056059 041655Z /43

O 041620Z MAY 79
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY GEORGETOWN IMMEDIATE
UNCLAS STATE 113380
E.O. 12065: N/A
TAGS: SOPN, GY
SUBJECT: EXCERPTS FROM DEPARTMENT PRESS BRIEFING OF MAY 3 RE GUYANA
1. THE FOLLOWING IS AN ON THE RECORD TRANSCRIPT OF DEPARTMENT'S NOON PRESS BRIEFING FOR MAY 3, 1979 RELATING TO THE CRIMMINS-CARPENTER REPORT RE THE JONESTOWN TRAGEDY.
BEGIN TEXT:
MR. CARTER:
I JUST WANT TO NOTE FOR THE RECORD MY OWN STRONG OBJECTION TO, AND PROTEST OF, THE BREAKING OF THE EMBARGOED STORY ON THE REPORT BY TWO RETIRED FOREIGN SERVICE OFFICERS ON THE DEPARTMENT'S HANDLING OF THE GUYANA INCIDENT.
THE REASON I PROTEST PERSONALLY IS THAT HAVING ARRANGED TO HAVE THIS THING OUT TWO DAYS IN ADVANCE, YOU HAVE
UNCLASSIFIED
UNCLASSIFIED
PAGE 02 STATE 113380
JUST MADE -- THROUGH THE WASHINGTON STAR -- THE BEST ARGUMENT THIS BUILDING HAS FOR NOT RELEASING INFORMATION EARLY AND MAKING IT MORE POSSIBLE TO EXAMINE CLOSELY.
I UNDERSTAND THAT'S A NEWS MANAGEMENT DECISION AT THE STAR. I THINK IT STINKS.
Q. HODDING, ABOUT THE GUYANA REPORT. FIRST OF ALL, DOES THE LEADERSHIP OF THE DEPARTMENT CONCUR IN THE CONCLUSIONS REACHED IN THAT REPORT?
A. THE LEADERSHIP OF THE DEPARTMENT ASKED FOR THE REPORT. A COPY HAS BEEN PROVIDED TO ALMOST EVERYBODY IN THIS BUILDING.
GIVEN THE FACT THAT IT WAS SUPPOSED TO BE RELEASED FOR TOMORROW, I DON'T HAVE AN OFFICIAL POSITION TO GIVE ON IT. I STILL WANT TO WAIT FOR TOMORROW MORNING'S BRIEFING BY THE AUTHORS OF THAT REPORT FOR A DETAILED CONVERSATION ABOUT WHAT THEIR FINDINGS WERE, BECAUSE OBVIOUSLY THERE ARE QUESTIONS THAT ARE RAISED THAT THEY ARE BEST ABLE TO DEAL WITH.
WE WILL, OF COURSE, BE STUDYING IT -- BOTH IN TERMS OF A BIT OF HISTORICAL RESEARCH, AND AS A GUIDE TO POSSIBLE
UNCLASSIFIED /

DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC/MR
REVIEWED BY [signature] DATE 2/26/81
EDS☐or XDS☐EXT. DATE
TS AUTH. REASON(S)
EXEMPTIONS EXISTING MARKINGS ☐
DECLASSIFIED☐ RELEASABLE☒
RELEASE DENIED☐
PA or FOI EXEMPTIONS

CHANGES. WHAT THOSE MAY BE, I JUST DON'T KNOW.
NOW COPIES HAVE BEEN SENT UP TO THE HILL, BUT I WANT
TO SEPARATE OUR REPORT FROM WHAT THE HILL IS CONDUCTING
ITSELF. THE HOUSE COMMITTEE HAS A FULL INVESTIGATION
AND REPORT COMING. I ASSUME THAT THEY WILL DRAW ON
THIS TO SOME DEGREE. BUT THEY HAVE AN ENTIRELY DIFFERENT
ONE.
UNCLASSIFIED
UNCLASSIFIED
PAGE 03 STATE 113380
IN ANY CASE, YES, WE WILL BE LOOKING SERIOUSLY -- THE
SECRETARY OF STATE AND THE LEADERSHIP IN THIS DEPART-
MENT -- AT THE REPORT, AND ITS CONCLUSIONS.
Q. TO FOLLOW UP ON THE POINT YOU RAISED ABOUT THE
FUTURE-ORIENTED APPROACH TO IT. ASIDE FROM WHAT THE
REPORT SAYS, HAVE THERE BEEN ANY CHANGES IN PROCEDURES
THAT THE DEPARTMENT USES FOR HANDLING CONTROVERSIES
INVOLVING AMERICANS ABROAD? HAVE ANY OF THE LESSONS THAT
HAVE ALREADY BEEN LEARNED BEEN PUT INTO PRACTICE?
A. LET ME SAY, WITHOUT TRYING TO ITEMIZE EVERYTHING,
THAT THERE HAVE BEEN SEVERAL STEPS TAKEN -- THIS REPORT
BEING ONE -- BUT ALSO SOME SUGGESTIONS FOR AT LEAST
IMPROVED FOCUS WITHIN THE CONSTRAINTS THAT ARE SO
CAREFULLY NOTED IN THIS REPORT ON OUR ABILITY TO DEAL
WITH AMERICAN CITIZENS ABROAD. THERE HAS BEEN AT
LEAST AN ATTEMPT TO FOCUS ALL OF OUR POSTS' ATTENTION
ON THE KIND OF PROBLEMS WHICH MAY ARISE WHEN YOU HAVE A
LARGE CONCENTRATION OF AMERICANS ABROAD IN SPECIFIC
KINDS OF SITUATIONS.
THE REQUEST FOR FOCUS PAYS CAREFUL HEED TO THE ABSOLUTE
RIGHTS THAT AMERICAN CITIZENS HAVE TO OPERATE WITHOUT
GOVERNMENT INTERFERENCE IN A NUMBER OF IMPORTANT WAYS
GUARANTEED BY THE FIRST AMENDMENT, THE CONSTRAINTS
PLACED ON US BY THE PRIVACY ACT, AND AT LEAST SOME OF
THE CONSTRAINTS PLACED ON US BY THE FREEDOM OF INFORMA-
TION ACT.
Q. HODDING, OBVIOUSLY, LOOKING THROUGH THIS REPORT,
IT'S EASY TO SAY IN HINDSIGHT THAT SOME OF THE OFFICERS
WHO DISREGARDED OR WHO DIDN'T TAKE SERIOUSLY SOME OF THE
WARNINGS THEY GOT SHOULD HAVE TAKEN THEM MORE SERIOUSLY.
UNCLASSIFIED
UNCLASSIFIED
PAGE 04 STATE 113380
DOES THE DEPARTMENT AGREE WITH THAT? AND IF SO, HAVE ANY
OF THE INDIVIDUALS WHO WERE INVOLVED IN THE HANDLING
OF THE CASE -- EITHER HERE OR IN GUYANA -- BEEN REPRI-
MANDED, DEMOTED, OR ANY OTHER KIND OF DISCIPLINE?
A. THE ANSWER TO THE LATTER THING IS NO, BECAUSE WE
HAVE JUST NOW RECEIVED THE REPORT.
Q. YOU'RE NOT RULING OUT THE POSSIBILITY THAT THAT
MIGHT OCCUR?

A. I'M NOT RULING ANYTHING ON THAT, BOB. I DON'T WANT TO LEAVE OPEN THE POSSIBILITY; I DON'T WANT TO TURN IT DOWN. I HAVE NO IDEA WHAT THE MECHANISMS OF THE DEPARTMENT MIGHT DO. WE HAVE TO EXAMINE THE REPORT. I THING YOU WILL JUST HAVE TO ASK SOMEBODY MORE FAMILIAR THAN I WITH THE WAY THINGS LIKE THAT WORK.
LET ME SAY THIS: A FAIR QUESTION TO ASK ME OVER A PERIOD OF TIME, AFTER THIS REPORT HAS BEEN DEIGESTED, IS WHETHER OUR CONCLUSIONS ARE SPECIFIC AS WELL AS GENERAL AS TO WHAT WE OUGHT TO DO OR LEARN FROM IT. BUT AS OF NOW, THERE IS NO ACTION NOR IS THERE ACTION CONTEMPLATED. THE REPORT HAS JUST BEEN RECEIVED.
I DON'T, AGAIN, WANT TO TRY TO JUDGE WHAT THE DEPARTMENT'S REACTION IS GOING TO BE TO THIS STUDY. BUT I WANT TO REPEAT, IT WAS DONE CAREFULLY AND THOROUGHLY. SOME OF THE POINTS THAT ARE MADE ARE CLEARLY GOING TO BE TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT. I THINK COORDINATION AND RESPONSIBILITY ARE A PROBLEM IN EVERY ORGANIZATION.
I HAD OCCASION TODAY TO LEARN JUST HOW DIFFICULT THAT

CAN BE IN A NEWSPAPER IN WHICH EDITORS AND REPORTERS DON'T SEEM TO BE ABLE TO TRANSMIT INFORMATION BACK AND FORTH AS TO OBJECTIVE FACTS. SO I'M SURE THAT IT IS A DIFFICULTY IN A BIG, BUREAUCRATIC OPERATION LIKE THIS.
Q. WHEN SHOULD WE EXPECT TO HEAR WHAT THE DEPARTMENT IS GOING TO DO ABOUT THE REPORT?
A. I WAS SUGGESTING TO BOB THAT YOU HAVE TO JUST KEEP ASKING ME. I DON'T HAVE A SUGGESTION AS TO THAT.
Q. WHAT I WANT TO KNOW IS, WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO ABOUT THE STAR?
A. (LAUGHTER) IT'S A FREE COUNTRY -- CONSTRAINED BY ALL THE AMENDMENTS THAT I CAN THINK OF.
Q. NOW THAT THE REPORT HAS BEEN DONE AND THE HILL IS ABOUT TO APPARENTLY RELEASE SOME KIND OF REPORT, WILL THE DEPARTMENT RELEASE, UNDER THE FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT, THE DOCUMENTS THAT WE ALL REQUESTED BACK IN NOVEMBER AND DECEMBER?
A. I SUPPOSE THAT A LOT OF THE HOLDS THAT WERE PUT ON THAT MATERIAL BECAUSE OF THE TWO INVESTIGATIONS WILL SLIP. BUT I CAN'T SPEAK SPECIFICALLY FOR EVERY DOCUMENT. I DON'T KNOW.
THERE IS A TREMENDOUS BACKLOG OF REQUESTS. THERE IS A FANTASTIC AMOUNT IN THERE. I'M LOOKING AT SEVERAL OF YOU WHO HAVE THEM IN. BUT I HAVE BEEN MADE MORE IRRESPONSIBLE ON THE SUBJECT THAN NOT SINCE THAT WHOLE FUNCTION HAS BEEN MOVED FROM MY BUREAU TO ANOTHER ONE. BUT I WILL SEE WHAT THE SITUATION IS.
Q. SOME OF THE INFORMATION WHICH WE REQUESTED, AND HAS

BEEN UNAVAILABLE FOR MONTHS, IS IN THIS REPORT --
WHICH, BACK TO THIS QUESTION THEN, WOULD YOU AT LEAST
CHECK TO SEE NOW IF --
A. YES. I'M TAKING THAT QUESTION AS TO NOW WHAT -- I
WILL ASK THAT OFFICE, WHICH IS NOW IN LIMBO BETWEEN TWO
BUREAUS -- WHERE WE ARE.
Q. THIS REPORT HAS A LOT ABOUT OFFICES BEING IN LIMBO,
TOO. (LAUGHTER)
A. I AM FAMILIAR WITH ALL THAT.
END TEXT
2. DEPARTMENT WILL POUCH TAPE OF MAY 4 CRIMMINS-
CARPTENTER PRESS CONFERENCE TO EMBASSY. VANCE
UNCLASSIFIED